

Vests



Well-dressed with vests

Whether peeking out from a dapper dinner jacket, providing the finishing touch on a well-heeled rodeo rider, or lending just the right attitude to a bartender, taxi driver, or barber shop quartet, vests can make a snazzy addition to your puppet's appearance.

And, by making the vest reversible (optional), you can create two costumes in the time of one!

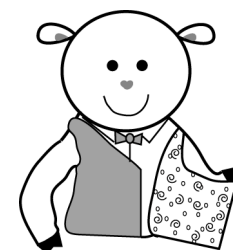
What you need

- ✂ Fabric for the outside (enough to cut out two basic pattern front and backs)
- ✂ Fabric for the lining (same amount as the outside fabric)
- ✂ Buttons (optional)
- ✂ Basic pattern front & back
(as described in the “Easy pattern making” chapter)

Sew many fabrics

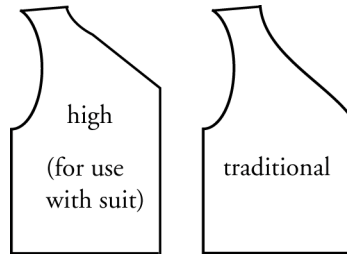
When choosing fabrics for a reversible vest, make sure that neither fabric is so dark it would show through the other.

Beyond that, you can use any fabric you want! Depending on the look you're looking for, you can make vests from satin (polyester), denim, doe suede, even wild cotton prints. The inside doesn't need to match the outside at all.

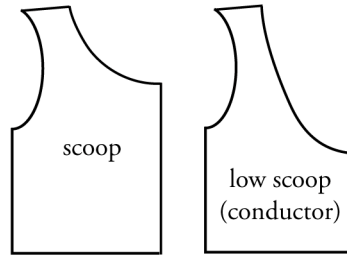


Tweak the pattern

Once you have your basic front and back patterns (from the chapter “Easy pattern making”) ready to go, you can use them as is, or you may want to adjust the neckline.

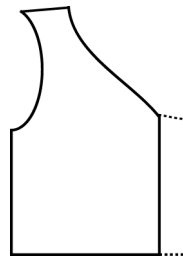


(If you plan on using the vest with a suit, make sure the neckline on the vest is high enough to allow the vest to show.)



Adjust for fasteners

You probably want some sort of fastener in the front of the vest, like buttons, snaps, or velcro. If so, the pieces for the vest front need to be able to overlap 1-1 1/2”. So, you need to extend the inside edge of your front pattern by this amount.

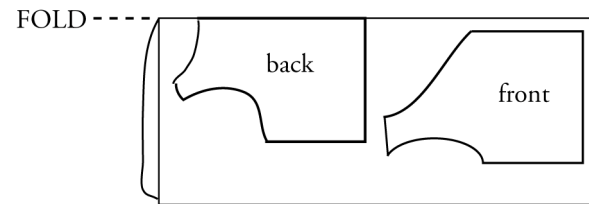


Cut out the fabric and lining pieces

To make a vest, you need:

- ✂ 2 front pieces cut from fabric
- ✂ 1 back piece cut *on the fold* from fabric
- ✂ 2 front pieces from lining material
- ✂ 1 back piece cut *on the fold* from lining material

The layout should look something like this:

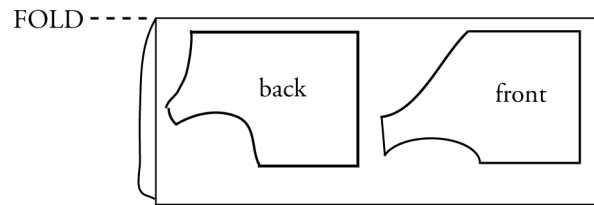


For more information about cutting out fabric, please see page 45.

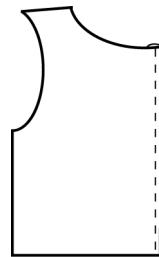
If you need an opening in the back...

If you have a puppet that needs an opening in the back of its costumes (like many traditional style ventriloquist characters), or you want to place a zipper or other fastener in the back of the vest, there are a few steps you need to follow before you can continue.

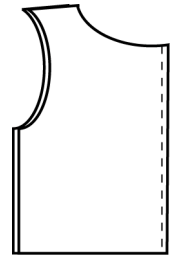
1. Cut out your back pattern pieces with 1/4" extra fabric (or lining material) on the inside edge.



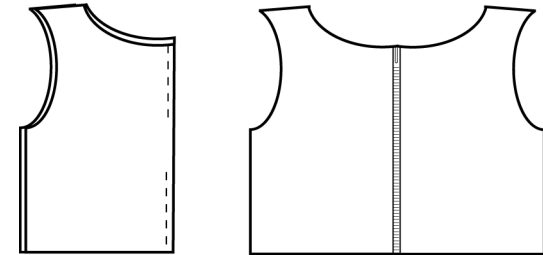
2. Fold the inside edge of each back piece under 1/4", iron it flat, and stitch along the edge.



3. Place your each fabric piece right sides together with its matching lining piece and stitch them along the inside edge.



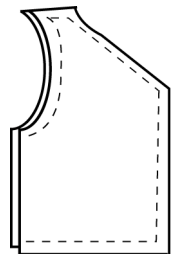
4. Place the back pieces on top of each other (fabric sides together) and stitch along the inside edge, leaving an opening where your puppet needs it. **OR...** Insert a zipper (or other fastener) instead of stitching.



Now you can continue with the rest of the vest!

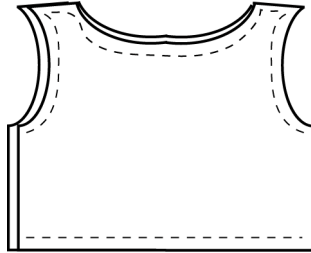
Sew the lining to the fabric

1. Place one of the lining front sections and one of the fabric front sections right sides together.
2. Stitch along all the edges *except* for the edge underneath the armhole.



3. Do the same for the other lining and fabric front sections.

4. Now do the same for the lining and fabric backs.



Turn the vest right side out and you're ready to "Put on the finishing touches" (page 71).

Sew the front and back together (for reversible vests)

With reversible vests, some of the stitching will show, so be extra careful to use a matching colored thread. If the inside and outside of the vest are wildly different colors, you can put one color thread in the top of your machine and another color in the bottom (bobbin). Just make sure that when you stitch the vest together, you have the fabric that goes with the top color on top, and the fabric that goes with the bottom color on the bottom.

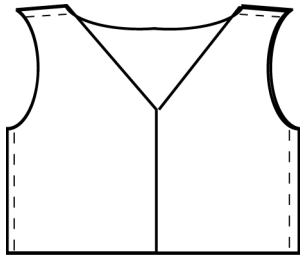
Sew the front and back together (for single-sided vests)

If you don't need the vest to be reversible, go ahead and follow these steps. For a reversible (two-sided) vest, skip this section and go on to "Sew the front and back together (for reversible vests)."

1. Turn all the vest pieces right side out and iron them flat.

2. Place the front and back pieces fabric sides together, lining them up along the sides and shoulders.

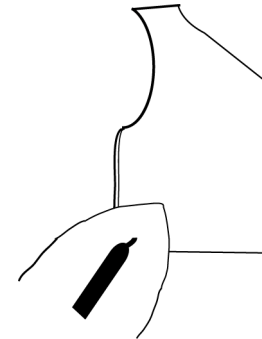
3. Stitch the front and back pieces together along the sides and shoulders.



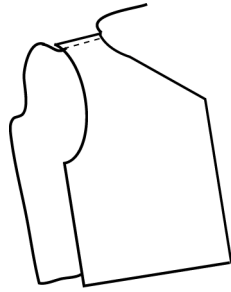
1. Turn all the vest pieces right side out and iron them flat.

2. Turn the unstitched side edge on all the pieces under 1/4" and iron firmly.

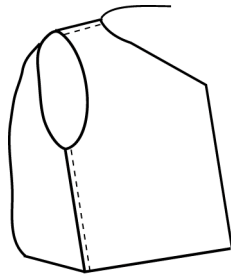
3. Place the front and back pieces fabric sides together, lining them up along the sides and shoulders.



4. Overlap the front and back shoulder edges by 1/4" and stitch them together.



5. Overlap the outer sides of the front and back pieces by 1/4" and stitch them together.

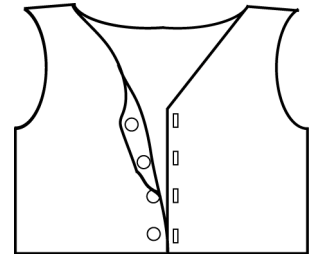


You're now ready to put the finishing touches on your (puppet's) reversible vest!

Put on the finishing touches

If you want, you can add buttons (and buttonholes) to the front of the vest by following the directions on pages 33-35.

For reversible vests, you need to put buttons on the inside and outside of the vest so you can button it no matter which side is facing out. Make sure that both sets of buttons line up with the buttonholes.



Now that's well-dressed!

